

ECEAP Edition

Volume 1, Issue 7 – August 2000

"A monthly update for family and friends of preschoolers in Washington State"



What's in a Name?

by Carol Rediske-Mudd, Children's Services

This writer has struggled to keep a straight face during introductions, especially when someone says to me, "Oh, your name is Mudd?" Other names, such as Kleenex and Jello, have become such household words that the actual brand name stands for the product itself. Some names have instant name recognition which supports a public image of the product, such as ToysRUs or BigToy. Some of our state's child and family programs have an easier time "selling" who they are based on their name – for instance, Project STEPS (Sequenced Transition to Education in the Public Schools), and Healthy Child Care Washington.

ECEAP, however, is not a descriptive name. People unfamiliar with our program are hard-pressed to identify us and our mission by our name. Children's Services has talked about the ECEAP name and how we could enhance people's ability to remember the program, but it hasn't been easy. Two of the more creative and humorous suggestions have been:

- ◆ KNEECAP – Knowledgeable Nexus of Early Education for Children And Parents; and
- ◆ RECEAP – Ree-ally Early Childhood Education and Assistance Program.

As you can see, we're struggling! What we'd like to do is get our collective gray cells cooking on this name thing, so . . .

We're having a 'name-storm' brainstorm! Here are the official rules:

1. Develop ideas for a new name to replace or supplement our existing name: ECEAP;
2. The new name should be short – 6 words or less. It can be a short phrase, or an acronym which stands for a short phrase;
3. The new name should convey our mission – serving young children and their families;
4. The new name should lend itself easily to logo creation; and
5. The new name must not duplicate any other state program/project name, or a nationally recognized name.

Please e-mail your entries to **ECEAP_Admin@cted.wa.gov** or FAX them to 360-586-0489 by September 25. You may enter as many times as you wish, and we encourage bundling of entries from ECEAP programs, sites, and families. We can't offer a prize, but imagine the pride if your selection ends up as the new name for Washington State's preschool program!

All appropriate entries will be read aloud at the 'name-storm' session at the September 28 Directors' Retreat. (Remember that date when completing your entries!) From that meeting, entries will be narrowed down to a final list for consideration. Watch this newsletter for updates, and get your creative energies flowing! ◆

The waiver for the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) has been approved again this year retroactive to June 1, 2000. There will be more information to follow from OSPI. If you have questions, call Carol Griffith at 360-753-3580 or e-mail **griffith@ospi.wednet.edu**.

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childhood education and family services."*

Voting – Our Right & Responsibility

by Carol Rediske-Mudd, Children's Services

After reading last month's article reflecting on the importance of voting, some of you may be asking "how can I vote?" First and foremost, you need to register to vote. And to do this, you must:

- ◆ Be a citizen of the United States and a legal resident of Washington State; and
- ◆ Be at least 18 years old by election day.

Where do I go to register to vote?

There are lots of places in your community where you can register to vote. Most public libraries and schools have voter registration forms – call or visit them to inquire (you can find them in most phone books under the government section near the front). You can also register to vote at your county auditor or elections department at the county courthouse.



Many public libraries also have computers and allow patrons free access time to the Internet. If you have access to the Internet, you can visit the Secretary of State's website at: <http://www.secstate.wa.gov/voting>. This website is a treasure trove of information and can start you down the road to becoming a registered voter in our state, plus inform you about the candidates and issues on which you will be voting. You can also print a voter registration form or ask them to mail you a copy to complete and return.

What information will I be asked?

The information you will be asked to complete on the voter registration form includes some of the following:

- ◆ name, address where you live and receive mail, and daytime phone number
- ◆ sex and date of birth
- ◆ is this a new registration, an address change, or a name change?

If you are already a registered voter and you would like to vote by permanent absentee ballot, you need to contact your county auditor or elections department. If you move to a new county, you must complete a new voter registration. If you move within the same county you do not need to re-register. The state also has an address confidentiality program to assist survivors of domestic violence and sexual assault who have

relocated to avoid further abuse. Services and assistance can be provided for voters with disabilities as well.

When do I need to register?

Your registration must be postmarked at least 30 days before the next election, otherwise your registration will not take effect until after the upcoming election. For this fall, that means your registration must be postmarked no later than August 19th to be effective for the September primary elections on September 19th, and no later than October 7th for the General Election on November 7th, 2000. If you miss this deadline, you can still sign-up for the election by registering in person at your county elections department no later than 15 days before the election (by September 4th for the Primary and October 23rd for the General Election). This year's elections feature races for President, Congress, Governor and other executive branch state offices, state Supreme Court, and most of the state's Legislature.

So once I register to vote, what's next?

Get informed! What are the issues you feel strongly about – issues that will affect your family's life? Talk with your neighbors and friends about your hopes and dreams for your community. Follow the news about political races and issues. Attend forums where you can ask questions of political candidates. Read your voter's pamphlet when you receive it in the mail for information on candidates and issues.

I'll Vote!

So now that you have registered and taken steps to become an informed voter, the final step is to circle the voting dates above on your calendar in red, and then VOTE! And, congratulate yourself for caring enough to take the time to become informed, voice your opinions, and change your community. ◆

If you would like further information, you can contact the toll-free Voter Hotline at 1-800-448-4881 (TDD: 1-800-422-8683), send an e-mail to: elections@secstate.wa.gov or write to: Office of the Secretary of State, Elections Division, Legislative Building, P.O. Box 40220, Olympia, WA 98504-0220

Helping Families Meet Their Goals

by David Johnson and Diana Larsen-Mills, DSHS

If you could ask any parent what their dreams and goals in life were, what would they say? And, if you ask them what things might keep their family from meeting those dreams and goals, what might they say? Sometimes, families aren't always ready to have children or don't have good information about how to plan their families. Children are one of life's most precious gifts, but dealing with unplanned pregnancies can also be extremely stressful and will often sidetrack families from fully meeting their dreams and goals.

In Washington State, over 50 percent of all pregnancies are unplanned at the time of conception, mirroring national statistics. About half of these "unintended" pregnancies end in termination and the other half in the birth of the child. A coalition of state and private agencies meets regularly looking for ways to reduce the unplanned pregnancy rate by three percent per year over the next six years.

Parents that receive good information about family planning options are generally quite appreciative. They feel empowered and supported as they try to realize their individual hopes and dreams for their family. If a pregnancy is not planned, the opportunity to create a healthy environment, free of cigarettes, alcohol, and other drugs, can be missed. Washington State is taking active steps to assist families in planning for and spacing their children. One such tool is a

statewide toll-free phone number anyone can call to confidentially discuss all their options with a family planning professional. That phone number is **1-800-770-4334**.

We all realize how sensitive this topic can be for many individuals in the diverse and culturally rich ECEAP environment in which we operate. ECEAP administration in Olympia supports the effort to reduce unintended pregnancies and encourages contractors, through their Family Support Specialists in the field, to approach this subject with parents. As such, all ECEAP contractors will be receiving shipments this summer of some general literature and giveaway pens/pencils which feature the Washington State Family Planning Hotline.

ECEAP welcomes Lori Stern as the new statewide Family Support Specialist, replacing Maryanne Patterson, who has taken a position out-of-state. Lori will be ECEAP's link with this statewide family planning effort. You can contact her if you have any questions or concerns at **Lorist@cted.wa.gov** or 360-753-5908. For other information about family planning, check out Planned Parenthood Washington at <http://www.plannedparenthood.org/affiliates/state-wa.html> or the National Family Planning & Reproductive Health Association at <http://nfprrha.org/facts/>. ♦

New Family Support Specialist

by Lori Stern, Children's Services

"Every child who walks through these doors sees his future. Every parent sees her past." –G. Reault

As we head into a new program year, we are seeing children and families we will work with, get to know, and from whom we will learn. How we approach them, welcome them, and hear their individual needs sets the groundwork and foundation for their involvement in our programs. At ECEAP, we embrace the notion of strengthening families while educating their children. What does family support mean? What does it look like? What are the opportunities... the challenges?

As the new ECEAP Family Support Specialist, I eagerly anticipate exploring these questions with you. It will be important to acknowledge the memories and histories that families and parents

have from their own preschool and school experiences. I look forward to creative and problem-solving ways to make both children and parents feel that ECEAP programs are happy places to learn and grow. It is not an easy task serving children and their families, while attempting to be developmentally and culturally appropriate with both. I hope I can be a resource and a partner in this important work. ♦

Lori Stern joins ECEAP with 8 years of experience providing parent/family education. She is co-author of Parenting Thru Play: An Interactive Parent Education Curriculum, designed for work with "harder to reach" parents. Lori also has expertise in working with teen parents and related issues.



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E-Mail Demystified, Episode Two

by Joyce Deshaye and Michael Zimmerman, Children's Services

Last month we compared "plain text" and HTML-formatted e-mail messages and discussed the basics of Internet etiquette, a.k.a. "netiquette". This month our IT guru, Joyce Deshaye, explains our assorted ECEAP e-mail systems. Since e-mail attachments can cause headaches for so many of us, we'll save the promised discussion on them for a larger article later.



If you have a hard time sorting out messages to and from ECEAP_Admin, ECEAP Directors, and ECEAP-Discussions in your e-mail inbox, please read on.

This article is intended to help you understand the key differences between each of those three items so you can be more efficient with your e-mail.

ECEAP Admin

ECEAP Admin is an e-mail address, much like the one you may have through your job or your Internet Service Provider (ISP) at home. It was originally set up to allow the public or contractors to contact Children's Services by e-mail when they did not know the address of a specific staff member, almost like an e-mail receptionist. Since then, ECEAP Admin has been used more frequently when Children's Services staff want to send a message that represents the "voice" of CSU as a whole, or to provide a centralized point for returning assignments or feedback/input from the field. **If you reply to or send a message to ECEAP_Admin@cted.wa.gov, our support staff will ensure it gets to the appropriate staff member in Children's Services.**

ECEAP Directors

ECEAP Directors is a group mailing list maintained internally by CSU staff. It is comprised of the names and e-mail addresses of all ECEAP Directors in the state and/or others they designate to receive messages from CSU. The list was developed by first typing all of the e-mail addresses and relevant information of the directors and/or their designees into a shared e-mail address book, and then defining the individual entries as a group mailing list, giving it the name "ECEAP Directors", and saving it for future use. Instead of typing 60 plus e-mail addresses or names every time we want to send a message to all contractors, we just select the "ECEAP Directors" group from our address book and the tedious work is done for us.

Many e-mail clients have this group mailing feature; it is worth exploring if you routinely send

messages to the same list of people, whether family or colleagues. We have group e-mail lists for both Head Start Directors and ECEAP ECCs which are set up just like the one for ECEAP Directors. Aside from providing the shortcut on our end, the group mailing lists have no special features, and messages should appear as normal on the receiving end. **If you reply to an e-mail sent to one of our group mailing lists such as ECEAP Directors, you will be responding only to the person who sent the original e-mail message, unless you intentionally reply to all (both sender and recipients), or specifically include one or more of the original recipients in your message.**

ECEAP-Discussions

The ECEAP-Discussions e-mail list (also known as WA State Early Childhood Education and Assistance Program Discussions E-mail List, but we use ECEAP-Discussions for short) uses special software to distribute and manage e-mail conversations. Currently, ECEAP-Discussions is a private list and not open to the general public. In order to subscribe, you need to contact the list owner, which in this case is Children's Services.

LISTSERV® is mailing list processing software with a registered trademark licensed to L-Soft International, Inc. It contains many useful features that will be outlined in a future newsletter article. We contract with the state Department of Information Services to provide LISTSERV® service for ECEAP use through ECEAP-Discussions.

The **ECEAP-Discussions@listserv.wa.gov** address is used by subscribers to send certain messages or announcements to many people at one time (also called "posting"). You only have to send a message to the one ECEAP-Discussions e-mail address, and the LISTSERV® software automatically sends a copy of your message to all current subscribers of our list. The special part is when you reply to a message sent through the LISTSERV®, your reply also goes to everyone on the list automatically. That way, groups can have an extended e-mail conversation where everybody participates and hears what they all have to say.

Beware – simply pressing the reply button will send your message to all ECEAP-Discussions subscribers. If you wish to reply only to the person who originally posted a message, send a separate e-mail directly to their personal e-mail address and not to ECEAP-Discussions. ♦

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